

2005 - 2007 LOCAL PROGRAM GUIDELINES

STP-URBAN, STP-RURAL and LOCAL BRIDGE

1. Purpose and description

These guidelines are for project requests from Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) district officials for the three-year 2005-2007 Local Programs submittal and approval cycle. These programs are Surface Transportation Program (STP)-Urban, STP-Rural and Local Bridge.

As originally described in the February 27, 1997 Local Programs' Guidelines, a three-year program was developed beginning in 1999-2001. This change recognized the increasing complexity of local projects and a need to encourage greater program stability. For 2005-2007 this means "refreshing" the last year of the previous program cycle, 2005, and adding two more years (2006 and 2007) of funding. Refreshing 2005 means examining the level of projects already approved for 2005, then incorporating additional dollars in the event they become available.

We are operating under Wisconsin's biennial budget for 2001- 2003, and programming projects for state fiscal years (SFYs) 2005-2007. Proposed funding levels are based on reauthorization of the federal transportation budget for 2004 and beyond, and the 2003-2005 state biennial budget that is currently under consideration. For 2005-2007 program development, funding will remain at 2003-2005 levels and will be updated as necessary pending any federal or state changes.

All projects in areas above 50,000 in population should be part of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) process, and must be contained in the TIP prior to project authorization. If not, an amendment to the TIP will be necessary.

Policy changes

There are several major policy changes for this program cycle:

- The 2000 Census population data will be used for the 2005–2007 program cycle.
- Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) project agreements will be required to be capped at the federal amount approved. These agreements will be returned to WisDOT district offices if not capped.
- Local bridge projects will be required to be authorized for charging within the approved cycle per TRANS 213 for either replacement or rehabilitation.
- Structures over the federal sufficiency rating thresholds explained in TRANS 213 will not be allowed to be submitted for funding.

- Access to the Local Programs Guidelines (06-03-02) will be available via the Internet.
- A pilot designed for locals and WisDOT district staff to jointly evaluate potential local projects before they apply to WisDOT for funding is underway. Districts participating in the pilot include 2, 4, 5, and possibly 6.

The purpose of this effort is to improve program stability by providing more accurate cost estimates and realistic delivery timelines for local highway and bridge projects at the outset, saving locals and WisDOT time and cost in delivering these projects.

Tools to assist all districts and locals in this area are being developed and will be available on WisDOT's Web site at: <http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov/highways/>.

Process changes

Automation of local entitlements project status

- The *Obligation Record* will be required to be completed “manually” for the 2005-2007 program cycle using the spreadsheets provided by the Bureau of Transit and Local Roads (BTLR), or using the current district method. The automation of the Obligation Record program and screen are still in the process of being developed.
- To allow district staff adequate time to complete the *Obligation Record* portion of the process, the timeline and interim deadlines for development of all three programs have each been adjusted to be around one month later than the 2003-2005 program.
- Status on the “Automating Entitlements” portion of FIIPS will be discussed directly with district staff. The completion date for the “Automating Entitlements” is May 30, 2003.

Statewide solicitation letters

- Due to significant variation in the current letters – in style and in amount of information provided by the eight WisDOT districts to local communities – a single, statewide letter will not be required for this program cycle. However, WisDOT will attempt to come to agreement on a single letter for the next program cycle.

2. General instructions

a. In general, WisDOT district offices should not allow local communities to request design and construction for the same project in the same program cycle. Exceptions will exist, for example, resurfacing and small bridge projects, which can typically be designed and built within a two to three-year period. More guidance in this area is available on WisDOT's Web site at <http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov/highways/>.

b. At this time, we anticipate continuing the practice of allowing up to half of the approved design engineering in the 2005-2007 programs to be advanced into state fiscal 2004. This allows

locals to begin engineering work for all of the programs, and contributes to getting projects designed and constructed on time. WisDOT district offices will have to identify approved projects for which locals want to advance the design, and BTLR will approve these requests. However, the ability to do this will depend upon biennial budget outcomes.

c. Because a new program is being developed, project substitutions will not be accepted between now and 60 days after the publishing date of the Approved Projects List of approved projects.

d. All projects should have a valid *State/Municipal Agreement* before any funds can be obligated. BTLR accepts/approves all such agreements for the department. The *State/Municipal Agreement* process will be reviewed for potential changes during the 2005-2007 program cycle.

e. The WisDOT *Program Management Manual (PMM)* will be a major source for implementation and policies for the 2005 - 2007 program.

3. Program overview

Local Bridge

The estimate is \$34,760,000 (\$26,290,000 federal and \$8,470,000 state) per year for 2006 and 2007. Local bridge projects are funded 80% federal or state, and 20% local.

Wisconsin uses an "entitlement" formula to distribute Local Bridge funding. That formula uses *Replacement Cost* as a basis for distribution of funds. Each county gets a proportional share of the total allocation based on the cost of replacing those bridges with a sufficiency rating of less than 50. While the cost is based on replacement, the sufficiency rating determines whether the bridge is eligible for replacement or rehabilitation.

County highway commissioners will continue to establish bridge priorities within their county per TRANS 213. For all local bridge projects we will continue to use the statewide formula ranking process to complete the statewide analysis described in the WisDOT *Program Management Manual (PMM)*, Chapter 6, to determine the approved 2005-2007 Local Bridge Program.

The *Entitlement Form* will contain the April 2002 *Replacement Cost* and percentage information for counties. Entitlement balance information will not be available until after the Guidelines are published. Local Bridge entitlement balances will be calculated and sent to WisDOT district staff.

It is expected that the April 2003 data will be available to be used shortly before ratings and rankings are calculated to get the list of approved projects. Therefore, the *Replacement Cost* and subsequent 2005-2007 *Entitlement* may change.

To be eligible for federal aid, structures must either be "functionally obsolete" or "structurally deficient." These definitions are part of the federal requirements. In general, "functionally obsolete" means that the width, vertical clearance or load rating of the bridge does not meet

modern standards. "Structurally deficient" means that a major element of the bridge (deck, abutments, or girders) is seriously deteriorated or damaged.

When developing proposed Local Bridge projects, the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists should be considered, especially when a bikeway had been previously designated as part of a regional or local bicycle and pedestrian system, and when local demands indicate a need. In general, bicycle and pedestrian accommodations can be funded through the program if they are constructed at the same time the motor vehicle lanes are replaced or rehabilitated.

TRANS 213 also allows rehabs on bridges with sufficiency ratings less than 80 if certain conditions are met. An engineering study must be undertaken independently, i.e. using local dollars, by the local agency that indicates the rehabilitation would:

- (1) Be cost effective;
- (2) Extend the life of the bridge by at least 10 years; and,
- (3) Correct the deficiencies that caused the sufficiency rating to be less than 80.

Projects cannot be submitted for rehabilitation that have a sufficiency rating over 80. The federal requirements of functional obsolescence and structurally deficient will determine an eligible project, not its ability to return the rating back over 80.

STP-Rural

The estimate is \$25,927,400 federal funds per year for 2006, and 2007. STP-Rural projects are funded 80% federal, and 20% local.

Minor collectors remain eligible for funding in the 2005-2007 STP-Rural Program. Under TEA-21, rural minor collectors are eligible for federal funding at state discretion. In Wisconsin, these routes are eligible, but the program is limited to a total of \$2 million annually under federal rules (\$4 million total for the two years of funding). A total of 6,397 miles under local jurisdiction currently fall into this category.

County highway commissioners will continue to set priorities for STP-Rural funding within their county. For all rural local roads projects we will continue to use the statewide formula ranking process to complete the statewide analysis described in the PMM, Chapter 6, to determine the approved statewide 2005-2007 STP-Rural Program.

Wisconsin uses an "entitlement" formula to distribute STP-Rural funding. That formula is based 60% on centerline mileage, and 40% on rural registration. The goal of STP-Rural continues to be to address significant improvement needs. To ensure counties with large amounts of minor collector mileage do not inappropriately benefit under this eligibility change, WisDOT and the Wisconsin County Highway Association (WCHA) have mutually agreed that minor collectors will be eligible to compete for program funding, but that this mileage will not be factored into the formula.

STP-Rural dollars may only be spent outside urban boundaries. The current formula generates funding priority based on factors completely outside of urban and urbanized areas. In Wisconsin, it is not appropriate to allow counties to propose to fund projects within those boundaries. It is a responsibility of WisDOT district offices to ensure no projects are submitted for STP-Rural funding which are located within urban boundaries.

WisDOT districts should use the mileage/registration factors on the Entitlement Form as a basis for the allocation estimates to the counties. Entitlement balance information will not be available until after the guidelines are published. STP-Rural entitlement balances will be calculated and sent to district staff.

STP-Urban (See "2005-2007 Estimated Annual Distribution Table")

The estimate is \$44,163,600 federal funds per year for 2006, and 2007. STP-Urban projects are funded 80% federal, and 20% local, except within an urbanized area. For urbanized areas, WisDOT allows approval of projects as low as the 50% federal limit and 50% local.

The 2000 Census population data is now available and will be used for the 2005–2007 program cycle. Federal law allocates STP-Urban funding using population as a basis for funding distribution. Urbanized and urban area designations are federally determined by population density. State borders are irrelevant in this initial designation. Funding for these multi-state entities are provided to each state based on its share of the urban or urbanized area population.

Total STP-Urban program funding will remain at 2003-2005 levels. A comparison of 1990 and 2000 Census data shows only minor shifts in Wisconsin's urban/rural population. The analysis reaffirms the use of the existing funding base for the urban/rural and Transportation Management Area (TMA) and Non-TMA allocations. The specific two-year allocation of funds is listed on the attached Estimated Annual Distribution page by the four population categories.

Urbanized areas

All 16 urbanized areas receive an annual allocation based on population. As TMA's (over 200,000 population), the Milwaukee and Madison urbanized areas are federally permitted to carry over funds from one program cycle to another. Starting in the 2005-2007 program cycle, Wisconsin includes a new TMA. This means funds for this category must include a portion for the Round Lake Beach TMA.

Annual allocations for the remaining 13 urbanized areas (50,000-200,000 population) are to be spent within the program cycle they are approved. Fond du Lac is now included as an urbanized area in the 50,000-200,000 population category. All urbanized areas select projects in cooperation with their respective Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). WisDOT continues to maintain entitlement balances for these areas to assist in the project selection process if they wish to use them.

All 16 of the urbanized areas must stay within their allocation of funds. The allocations cannot be adjusted upward. Project growth will need to be monitored by district staff and the MPO and

communities within the region through cooperative agreements within the urbanized area. Responsible choices based on mutual decision-making and consultation with the state will enhance the ability of the MPO's to manage their allocation and reduce the need for state intervention. MPO projects will be capped and specific instructions for project changes will be provided at program approval.

Urban areas

For urban areas, annual funding for each of the two categories (5,000 to 20,000 and 20,000 to 50,000 in population), also continue to be allocated by population (2000 Census).

Three new communities (Burlington, Watertown and Wisconsin Rapids) have been added to the 20,000 to 50,000 census population category for a total of six. The urban boundaries for 15 new communities will be finalized by the end of calendar year 2003. These communities will become fully eligible for federal aid in the next program cycle (2007-2009).

In addition, two communities formerly above the 5,000 population threshold (Berlin and Richland Center) dropped below the 5,000 level in the 2000 Census. Each urban area will remain eligible for federal aid in the 2005-2007 program cycle. WisDOT will make a decision on future STP-U funding eligibility for these communities based on the results of the final urban area boundaries.

It has been determined that the urban areas of Jefferson and Fort Atkinson will remain separate.

The statewide formula ranking process is used to complete the statewide "analysis" calculations described in the PMM, Chapter 6. The analysis, along with ranking projects is used to determine the approved STP-Urban Program for these projects.

4. Instructions for district submittals

Submittal forms will be sent electronically on MS Outlook e-mail and returned electronically. The forms format is Excel. Additional instructions relating to program development and submittal are detailed in PMM 06-03-03, the submittal instructions. More detailed instructions for each form are in the instructions for that form in the PMM:

Entitlement Form 06-03-04
Obligation Record 06-03-05

The forms are named and listed on the "Local Program Forms List" in Ch 06-03-03 2.c. Blank forms, and sample forms that are partially filled out will be sent by e-mail.

5. Schedule of Submittals and Approvals

STP-Urban is developed and approved first. This will provide the MPOs as much time as possible to prepare their Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs). STP-Rural and Local Bridge will follow. The timelines, published monthly in *The Way It Is*, are:

**PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE
2005-2006-2007 Local Programs**

Program	Submittal Due Dates for OBR & EF	Approved Program Published	All Screen Fields Completed in FIIPS By:
STP-Urban	Friday, June 6 th	Friday, July 4 th	Friday, August 9 th
STP-Rural	Friday, June 27 th	Friday, July 25 th	Friday, August 29 th
Local Bridge	Friday, July 18 th	Friday, August 29 th	Friday, September 26 th

Schedule Notes: The submittal of project requests will be automated through FIIPS, but not the obligation recording process. The Obligation Record (OBR) and Entitlement Form (EF) will be completed manually. There is a three-week separation between the submittal of each program's forms; about a month to approve the projects and about another month to enter remaining request data into FIIPS. Please note that the schedule starting dates have been set back by one month. Entitlement Forms will be available to district staff by March 3 but will not include the "Used In" column, which is the results of the manual obligating process. Also see Chapter 06-03-03.

The Approved Project List will be available for consultants and the general public on WisDOT's Web site 15 business days following the publication of the Approved Projects List using the above "Approved Program" dates. No hard copies will be sent. Consultants will be notified of this change. The Approved Project List for consultants and the general public will not include approved funding levels.

Any questions regarding these guidelines should be directed to **both** Steve Coons, at (608) 267-4459, or e-mail at steven.coons@dot.state.wi.us and Alex Zanello, at (608) 266-1535 or e-mail at alex.zanello@dot.state.wi.us.